

The Citizen

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'Ready and Resilient'

U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart will support a stand down day to tackle issues of sexual assault and harassment April 3.

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Easter happenings

There are several nearby events you can 'hop' to for Easter fun. This issue's culture listings help get you ready for spring.

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New policy enforces restriction of off-post trash

Story & photos by

Mark J. Howell

USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs Office

U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart community members living on the economy are no longer allowed to dispose of garbage on the military installations.

The new policy, which will explain and outline the changes and associated administrative actions should one violate the order, is expected to be signed by the Garrison Commander, Col. John P. Stack, in April.

The policy applies to all military, civilian, foreign nation and contractor personnel, as well family members that live off the installations.

"We're one of the last garrisons in Europe to enforce this," Stack said. "With the budget challenges we're now facing, we can no longer look the other way."

Removal and disposal of garbage from the Stuttgart military community costs the garrison approximately \$1.3 million

annually, according to Mathias Eisele, an environmental specialist with the USAG Stuttgart Directorate of Public Works Environmental Office.

"The two collection points on Patch Barracks and Panzer Kaserne generate more than 320 tons of trash per year," Eisele said. "The current cost of garbage disposal is approximately \$87 per ton, so it really adds up."

Off-post residents trying to bring garbage onto the installation will also have difficulty finding a place to put it.

As part of the new initiative, the garrison will remove the community trash collection points located near the commissaries on Patch Barracks and Panzer Kaserne.

"The dumpsters will be taken away June 1, but there is an upside," Stack said. "We're adding 20 new parking spots to alleviate some of the parking concerns near the Patch Commissary."

The trash collection point on Robinson

See Trash on page 4



U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart's Directorate of Public Works recently installed signs throughout all Stuttgart military installations warning off-post residents to no longer dispose of their trash on post. Those caught violating the policy could face administrative actions.

Furlough impacts emerge for IMCOM workforce

Story by **Robert Dozier**

U.S. Army Installation Management Command

Army civilian personnel are bracing for the impact of furloughs and changing financial priorities on their organizations. Approximately 251,000 Department of the Army civilians expect to be notified soon if they will be furloughed up to 22 days starting in April.

In order to meet national security responsibilities, Installation Management Command is prioritizing readiness and programs based on the Army strategy, while adjusting to the fiscal resources available.

Furloughs are a result of the Budget Control Act passed Aug. 2, 2011, which requires more than \$487 billion in cuts from the defense base budget over 10 years, beginning in fiscal year 2013. A furlough places an employee in a temporary non-duty and non-pay status.

The Department of Defense has notified Congress of their intent to furlough most civilian employees up to 22 non-consecutive days – one day per week until the end of the fiscal year. Active duty, reserve and National Guard are exempt from furloughs.

How an individual employee or activity is affected by furloughs will be subject to the command and the

overall guidance of human resources and legal advice.

Furloughs have the potential to impact approximately 27,000 IMCOM employees. There may be some exceptions for those deployed in a combat zone and those duties protect life, health and safety of our Soldiers and their families.

All employees who may be furloughed are entitled by law to a 30-day notice before implementation. Notices were scheduled to go out the week of March 18.

The financial burden of the furlough will be the equivalent of an 8.5 percent annual reduction in pay. However, a one-day-per-week furlough during the last weeks of the fiscal year (from late April through September) equates to a 20 percent reduction in pay during that time period.

Overtime and compensatory time are curtailed, and no employee will be allowed to volunteer services during the furlough. Telework and the use of government issued electronics, such as BlackBerry phones, laptops or iPods will not be permitted on furlough days.

An additional burden within IMCOM will be the potential termination of temporary and term employees. The permanent workforce may have to pick up and fulfill these duties left vacant, while working 20 percent fewer man hours.

Health benefits, flexible spending accounts, fed-

eral group life insurance, vision and dental plans and federal long term care plans are not impacted during this furlough period. However, the employee is still responsible for the full premiums due for these benefits, even though their gross pay will be reduced.

These factors are expected to increase the stress on the workforce as they feel the impact on their home budgets while attempting to balance work priorities during a shortened work week.

Other questions on the furloughs are emerging. For example, how the work week schedule will be affected by furloughs is not clear. Some facilities and activities may accomplish their mission with a reduced workweek, while others may go to a rotating schedule in an attempt to maintain customer service.

Discretion is likely to be in the hands of the supervisor or division leader with guidance from the garrison commander, but clear guidance is not yet available.

Employee vacation days cannot be used to cover a furlough day, but there is no prohibition to taking accrued annual leave during the furlough period, with supervisor approval. The scheduling of annual leave during the furlough will likely be a lot tighter due to the reduced work hours and annual leave may need to

See Furlough on page 4

NCOs integral to preventing sexual assaults

**Commentary by Command Sgt.
Maj. David S. Davenport Sr.**
U.S. Army Europe

During a recent visit to U.S. Army Europe, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno highlighted the need for Soldiers to focus on the moral and ethical values that make the Army such a strong team. He further added that sexual harassment and sexual assault erodes those bonds and tarnishes the military profession.

Noncommissioned officers live by a creed that states, "My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind – accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers." It is an NCO's duty to end the crimes of sexual assault and harassment that erode the bonds of trust with Soldiers. Without that Soldier's trust, it puts all members of that team at risk.

Commanders and NCOs at all levels are crucial to eliminating this crime, but none are as important as those serving in company-level organizations. Those leaders have the most supervision and interaction with Soldiers and must strive to establish a climate of trust, which will encourage victims of sexual assault and harassment to report incidents without fear of reprisal. NCOs support a commander's accomplishment of this

mission through education and discussion. This helps establish local sexual assault prevention strategies and demonstrates the commitment of the command by setting a good example.

Commanders and command sergeants major are critical in creating the conditions to be successful by providing resources, training and staffing. Although money is the first resource that comes to mind and is important in sustaining a quality program, time is equally critical – not only for the units to conduct the training, discussions and events, but also for taking part in company-level activities so that Soldiers hear and see their commitment to eliminating sexual assault and harassment.

Sexual assault is a tough and complex crime that needs only the best Soldiers to serve as Sexual Harassment Assault Response Program coordinators. Thought must go into who will fill this critical role on a commander's staff. Commanders must look beyond the certifying checklist and into the character, personal communication skills, compassion and reputation of the person. It is more than filling out a certification packet and meeting a report to higher headquarters. Questions such as, "Does the SHARP coordinator have the skills necessary to handle the highly sensitive and personal situation when a Soldier has been a victim of assault?" must be asked.

Both of these topics were highlighted during a recent USAREUR women's forum hosted by the commander and myself that featured subject matter experts and more than 50 female Soldiers in various levels of responsibilities within our community. Many of the information sessions were followed by small group discussions exploring concerns about sexual assault and harassment, while helping develop recommendations to better USAREUR's overall program. On comment sheets and after action reviews, participants said they wanted to see more leaders at the training so that Soldiers could hear their commitment to the program. They also wrote about the importance of having the right person as the SHARP coordinator, who will take action while treating the victim with dignity and respect.

Before you can enforce a standard at the company level, you must know what the standard is and how it is applied. The same is true of sexual assault. Soldiers need to know it's a crime that will not be tolerated in the Army. The SHARP coordinator has an integral

role in prevention of this crime. NCOs need to know who their SHARP coordinator is and how to contact him or her. Crisis hotline phone numbers and unit points of contact should also be addressed during in-processing, reception or integration counseling. Consider conducting a terrain walk of the garrison agencies and first responders who will be called upon in a time of crisis, either as part of scheduled training or sponsorship. Education should come in forms other than memos posted on a unit bulletin board, a poster taped to a wall or a monthly celebration with information displays. It takes leaders sitting down and talking to their Soldiers, correcting and holding them accountable for inappropriate behavior, and setting the example of conduct for all to see what right looks like.

Once we are informed, we must begin an open and honest discussion on the subject of sexual assault. Challenging norms, culture and stereotypes through discussion not only allows for the standard to be taught but allows for NCOs to be seen as the example, addressing the crime facing our Army. Discussing with our Soldiers what consent really means; leveraging NCOs when they return from SHARP training and sharing with Soldiers what they learned are vital.

Our Army is one of action. NCOs, as the backbone of the Army, must heed their role in developing and implementing local sexual assault prevention strategies and preventing this crime. NCOs are trained on battle drills, but do they know how to handle a sexual assault? The majority of victims are under 24 years old, in the grades of private to specialist. The majority of perpetrators are male, under the age of 25 in the grades of private to specialist. Most incidents occur on weekends, with a victim new to the unit. Alcohol is almost always involved.

What are NCOs doing with these statistics? Does the unit charge of quarters have specific checks they are required to make to ensure enforcement of safety, security and policies? Does the staff duty NCO make random checks to ensure compliance? Are squad leaders truly engaged with their Soldiers to know what they are doing on weekends?

It's time for the backbone of the Army to stand up and take action. Let us not forget our commitment to our fellow Soldiers, the Army and the NCO Creed in mission accomplishment and ensuring the welfare of all Soldiers in peace and in war.

THE CITIZEN

Col. John P. Stack

U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Commander

Public Affairs Officer

Mark Howell

mark.j.howell4.civ@mail.mil

Command Information Chief/Editor

Susan Huseman

susan.j.huseman.civ@mail.mil

Culture Editor

Carola Meusel

carola.e.meusel.ln@mail.mil

Contact Information

Telephone: 431-3105/civ. 07031-15-3105

Fax: 431-3096/civ. 07031-15-3096

Email: stuttgartmedia@eur.army.mil

Website: www.stuttgart.army.mil

Office Location: Building 2949, Panzer Kaserne

U.S. Army Address: Unit 30401, APO AE 09107

German Address: USAG-S PAO, Panzer Kaserne,

Geb. 2949, 3rd Floor, Panzerstrasse, 71032 Böblingen

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Send us your Thorns and Roses



Thorns to the Panzer Fitness Center customer who decided to move one of the fitness bikes into the sauna, of all places. This bike weighs around 120 pounds and took up the complete floor area of the sauna. Any civilian fitness center would have revoked this person's membership.

Tell us who deserves a pat on the back for a kind deed or a thumbs down to those in the wrong. Thorns and Roses will let you, the reader, describe a good thing that happened (rose) or a low moment or tough situation that you had to deal with (thorn). This column is not about institutions, units or agencies. It's not about situations that could result in legal action under military or German law. Nor is it a place to air management-employee problems or slander anyone. It's about recognizing those who do a good job or make life a little easier. It's also about people who need to be a little more considerate of others. While we are happy to identify stellar service providers, we can't and won't identify under-performers by name. Submissions must be brief and emailed to stuttgartmedia@eur.army.mil with the subject line: Thorns and Roses. The author's name and valid telephone number must be included for verification. No anonymous submissions will be accepted. And we reserve the right to select submissions and edit them for publication. Note: Reader feedback is authorized by Army Regulation 360-1.



Photo courtesy of Megan Mack-Theisen

Air Force Lt. Col. Craig Theisen will lead Women's Empowerment self-defense classes at the Patch, Kelley and Panzer fitness centers April 3 as part of USAG Stuttgart Ready and Resilient Stand Down Day.

USAG Stuttgart supports USAREUR Ready and Resilient Day April 3

USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs Office

In 2012, the Stuttgart Criminal Investigation Division conducted 14 sexual assault investigations. Regardless of the outcome, that is 14 too many.

To address this problem, U.S. Army Europe has ordered a Ready and Resilient Stand Down Day April 3 with an emphasis on Sexual Harassment and Assault Reporting and Prevention.

Based on USAREUR guidance, the objectives of the stand down are to prevent further assaults, improve health and discipline of the force, enhance awareness and utilization of available SHARP resources and promote immediate intervention to prevent sexual assaults.

U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart will host several events in support of the stand down, which will be open to all community members.

The purpose of the stand down is to allow everyone to halt operations and focus on the issues associated with sexual harassment and assault, according to Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Trussell, USAG Stuttgart Equal Opportunity Advisor.

"This is a major issue within our ranks, and we need to change the culture of how sexual assault is perceived," Trussell said.

The stand down will be packed with events, centered on screenings of the Oscar-nominated documentary "The Invisible War," which highlights the issue of military sexual assault from the perspective of the victims. Immediately following the screenings, viewers can engage in a panel discussion with local subject matter experts ranging from military police to family advocacy representatives.

A community information fair will also be offered throughout the stand down at Army Community Service on Panzer Kaserne. The fair will feature booths from local agencies involved with the reporting of sexual harassment and assaults and victim support.

Another theme of the stand down is women's empowerment. In support, the garrison is also offering women's self-defense classes at the Patch, Kelley and Panzer fitness centers.

For additional information, contact your unit's SHARP advisor, or call 430-7945/civ. 0711-680-7945.

News & Notes

Free iPhone App not endorsed by TSP

The Apple App Store is offering a free iPhone application called TSP Funds. Once downloaded, Thrift Savings Program participants will be prompted to enter their account information.

The App is not endorsed by TSP and officials recommend not to use the application to access TSP accounts.

Providing TSP account information credentials to third-party applications could result in a possible security risk to your account or identity theft.

(This information was provided by Installation Management Command-Europe and www.tsp.gov).

Daylight saving time begins

Most of Europe will move its clocks forward by one hour when daylight saving time begins on Sunday, March 31. In Germany, daylight saving time begins at 2 a.m. (set clocks to 3 a.m.).

21st TSC now in charge of sexual assault hotline

The 21st Theater Sustainment now is in charge for the Army hotline for reporting sexual assaults. The 21st TSC took over the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program from U.S. Army Garrison Kaiserslautern's Army Community Service. Since its inception in 2009, Kaiserslautern's ACS has been the first responder for incidents involving sexual assault. With the transition, the program has expanded and now includes other Army locations in Europe, such as Baumholder and Stuttgart. The most noticeable change with the transition will be a new SHARP hotline number victims can call to report an incident.

"The phone number change just makes (the 21st TSC) the primary responders," said Sgt. 1st Class Aimee Wilson, the 21st TSC's SHARP program manager, in a news release. "The phone number that ACS responds to is still in effect." Reports of assault can still be made directly to Army Community Services staff if a person wants to avoid making a report directly to the 21st TSC, she added. The new SHARP hotline is DSN 484-7280/civ. 0631-413-7280. The line is open 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

(This information was provided by 21st Theater Sustainment Command)

DAZ hosts Consular Outreach Day April 15

The U.S. Consulate General Frankfurt and the Deutsch-Amerikanisches Zentrum/James-F.-Byrnes-Institut e.V. will host a Consular Outreach Day in Stuttgart April 15 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the DAZ German-American Center, Charlottenplatz 17, 70173 Stuttgart. The consulate staff will process passport applications and reports of birth abroad, and provide notary services. Representatives from the Social Security and Veterans Administrations and the Immigrant Visa Unit from the U.S. Consulate General will also be on hand.

Appointments are required for all services. To schedule an appointment, send an email with "Stuttgart" in the subject line to FrankfurtPassports@state.gov. No electronic devices will be allowed in the building. Electronic devices should be left at home, in a vehicle, or in storage at the train station.

Ready and Resilient Stand Down Day

Leader's Breakfast

7:30 a.m.: German Kantine, Patch Barracks, Bldg. 2386

Community Resource and Information Fair

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Army Community Service, Panzer Kaserne, Bldg. 2915

Free Fitness Classes

3:30 p.m.: Robinson Barracks Fitness Center, Bldg. 151

"The Invisible War" Screenings and Panel Discussions

9 a.m.: Patch Theater, Bldg. 2339

11 a.m.: Kelley Theatre, Bldg. 3320

1:30 p.m.: Kelley Theatre, Bldg. 3320

"Women's Empowerment" Self-defense Classes

7:30 a.m. Panzer Fitness Center, Bldg. 2990

10 a.m. Kelley Fitness Center, Bldg. 3326

1 p.m. Patch Fitness Center, Bldg. 2337

Furlough.....

Continued from page 1

be cancelled to meet the mission.

If a furlough day is scheduled immediately before and after a federal holiday, the employee will not earn the holiday pay. This has the potential to have additional impact on some pay periods including Memorial Day (May 27), Independence Day (July 4), and Labor Day (Sept. 2).

The availability of unemployment compensation to ease the effect of furloughs is difficult to summarize because the rules of each state will apply. Employees may seek part-time employment in the civilian sector, however, they should discuss with their supervisor to meet ethics requirements.

The effect of furloughs on an employee's Thrift Savings Plan depends on whether deductions are based on percentage of basic pay or on dollar amount and it may affect the agency's contribution. Since some retirement contributions are also based on a percentage of pay, officials encourage employees to meet with their human resources representatives or financial planners to determine how furloughs might affect their TSP and retirement contributions.

The availability of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs may also be affected, but the full impact is not yet known. This may impact the Army's ability to mitigate the negative effects of the furlough by providing Family and MWR activities and family support programs.

All sequestration and furlough plans and actions are designed to be reversible. If Congress passes a balanced deficit reduction plan that the President signs, the impact of sequestration on civilian employees may be avoided.

Editor's Note: Installation Management Command-Europe has created a frequently asked questions page with information on sequestration and potential furloughs.

For more information, visit <http://www.imcom-europe.army.mil/webs/sites/faq/index.html>.

Trash.....



Dumpsters at the Patch Barracks trash collection point overflow with garbage on most days. The collection point will close June 1 to make way for 20 new parking spots.

Continued from page 1

Barracks will remain as it used by the commissary and Exchange. Community members are not allowed to use the site.

Under the new policy, violators caught by military police will be subject to administrative actions starting with a citation on the first offense, but could escalate to loss of logistical support with multiple violations.

"If we see people dumping trash during our patrols, we'll stop and ask them where they live," said Maj. Paul Goynes, USAG Stuttgart Director of Emergency Services. "If it's determined they live off-post, we're going to write them up in accordance with the new policy."

Off-post residents should review their housing contracts with their landlords. If one pays "Nebenkosten," or utility costs, as part of rental agreements, trash collection is included.

Those who don't have this service included in their agreements, or if additional bins are needed, they should be ordered through their landlord.

In Germany, residents must sort their trash into separate bins, which are distinguished by color. Black bins are for general waste such as food and hygiene items. Blue or green is for paper products to include cardboard, newspaper and packaging free of food residue. Green can also be compost, where residents can dispose of garden

and lawn remnants and some solid foods like bread and cheese. In some areas, the compost bins are brown. Other nearby communities also offer bins with orange lids or yellow bags, which are used to dispose of plastic bottles and packing, cans, foil products and Styrofoam.

Colors of the bins will vary depending on where people reside.

Glass, bulky items, as well as chemicals and hazardous materials must not be thrown away in any of these bins, but should be taken to public disposal points located throughout the community.

Each county or town has an annual "Abfallkalender," or trash calendar, that lists the dates for each bin's pickup. It also includes the addresses for the public drop-off areas.

Landlords should be able to help tenants get a copy of the current calendar and explain which bins are available. If there is a language barrier between the landlord and tenant, the USAG Stuttgart Housing Office has translators available to assist.

"People living off post need to step up and use the services available to them on the economy," Stack said. "If Germans can do it, Americans can, too."

For more information on the regulations and off-post trash service, visit the garrison website at www.stuttgart.army.mil/trash.

Local scout Nicholas Fleischner and Ricky Payton, Sports and Fitness Director, hang a map in the Patch Fitness Center March 7. Nicholas created the map that highlights hiking trails around Patch Barracks as part of his Eagle Scout project.



Nicole Zuccola

Eagle Scouts achieve excellence through community service projects



Robert Reynolds, a scout with Kelley Barracks Troop 154, delivers winter clothing he collected to the women's shelter downtown Stuttgart March 7. As part of his Eagle Scout project to help local shelters, he collected \$1,000 in cash donations, 500 canned and dry good items, and winter clothing for men, women and children.

Liz Moore

Easter holidays, traffic, closures

Easter is March 31. During the Easter holidays, German stores will be closed Good Friday, March 29, as well as Easter Monday, April 1. Stores will be open for shoppers March 30.

Easter vacation for local German schools is set for March 25 to April 5. Traffic on German roads is anticipated to be heavy on the weekends.

- All Community Banks will be closed March 29 and April 1. The Panzer Community Bank will be open from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 30.

- The U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Housing Office and Vehicle Registration will be closed March 29 and April 1.

- The Personal Property Processing and Transportation Office will be closed March 29 and April 1.

- The 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Consolidated Dining Facility will be closed March 29.

Patrons are advised to call ahead before visiting any facility.

Garrison commander on AFN morning show

The U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart commander, Col. John P. Stack, will answer questions from Stuttgart military community members during a live call-in program on American Forces NetworkStuttgart March 26 from 7-9 a.m.

Listeners can submit their questions in advance on the garrison’s Facebook page at www.facebook.com/USAGarrisonStuttgart.

'Culture College' set for March 26 and 28

U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart’s Army Community Service will offer “Culture College” March 26 and 28. The two-day class consists of a classroom session (March 26 from 8:15 a.m. to 4 p.m.) and a Stuttgart city tour (March 28 from 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.). The classes will introduce military community members to German customs, culture, public transportation and Stuttgart landmarks.

Child care is available. Sign up at ACS, Building 2915, Panzer Kaserne.

For more information, or to

register, call 431-3362/civ. 07031-15-3362.

Panzer DFAC closed through March 29

The 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Dining Facility on Panzer Kaserne will be closed for unit training through March 29.

For more information, call 431-2734/civ. 07031-15-2734.

Due to PCS soon?

For those who plan to relocate, permanent change of station/pre-separation briefings will be held at 1 p.m. in Building 2913 on Panzer Kaserne on the following dates:

April 17, May 15, June 19, July 17
All service members and civilians departing within the next four to five months should attend. Advance registration is required.

Agency representatives from Transportation, Customs, the health and dental clinics, Tricare, Vehicle Registration, Housing and Army Community Service will provide PCS information.

Army personnel will also receive a briefing on finance issues. All separating Army personnel must

attend this briefing to receive pre-separation information.

For more information and to sign up, call 431-2599/civ. 07031-15-1599.

Military Personnel Division reduces hours

Due to minimal staffing, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart’s Military Personnel Division will reduce its service hours.

Effective immediately, the Military Personnel Services Branch on Panzer Kaserne will be closed Monday through Friday between noon and 1 p.m.

Starting March 27, the Personnel Services Branch will be closed on Wednesdays for processing reassignments and orders.

The Passport and ID offices on Panzer Kaserne are working with reduced staff. Patrons may experience longer waiting times.

For more information, visit <http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/DHR/MPDmilpersonnelsvc.html>.

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It's about consuming differently

Our planet has finite resources, and we are using them up at an alarming rate. Sustainable consumption is a challenge, and we need to consume more efficiently if we want to do more with less. The goal is to increase standards of living without putting the planet's resources under excessive strain. This is something that cannot be achieved overnight, and depends on shared responsibilities.

Everybody has a role! Consumers need to be empowered and better informed with decisions on what to buy. They also need to be protected against “green hype” and misleading advertising on environmental friendliness. There is a need to raise awareness about the “EU Ecolabel,” which identifies environmentally-friendly products and services.



For more information, visit www.ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel.

USAG Stuttgart Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division

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Army Tuition Assistance Program suspended

Story by David Vergun
Army News Service

Funding for tuition assistance ceased March 8 and Soldiers cannot submit new requests, according to Lt. Gen. Howard B. Bromberg, deputy chief of staff, Department of the Army G-1.

Approval for the tuition assistance, also known as TA, stoppage came from Secretary of the Army John McHugh, and affects Soldiers from both the active and reserve components.

Those currently enrolled in courses approved for TA are not impacted and will be allowed to complete their funded coursework.

Soldiers are encouraged to contact their local education centers with any question they may have regarding their education needs and planning, according to officials from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs/Army G-1. Also, updates on any changes to

the TA funding will be posted to www.goarmyed.com.

This suspension in funding “is necessary given the significant budget execution challenges caused by the combined effects of a possible year-long continuing resolution and sequestration,” the Department of the Army G-1 public affairs office wrote in a released statement March 8.

The suspension “will remain in effect until the fiscal situation matures,” Bromberg said in the statement. “The Army understands the impacts of this action and will re-evaluate should the budgetary situation improve,” he added.

TA funding, derived from the Army’s budget, is the only education funding affected at this time. Soldiers can continue their education using alternate methods.

GI Bill funding, which is derived from the Department of Veterans Affairs, is available and Soldiers can continue their education using this benefit.



Mark J. Howell

Service and family members attend a briefing at the Education Center on Panzer Kaserne March 13. Education center employees expect class enrollments will drop significantly as a result of the Tuition Assistance Program being suspended.

The funding includes the Montgomery GI Bill, Post-9/11 GI Bill and several other education programs listed on their web-

site: <http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/index.html>

Also, National Guard Soldiers may be eligible for state-

funded TA benefits. Federal loans or grants are another option for all Soldiers, as well as their families.

Read Across America



Photo courtesy of Patch Elementary School

Col. John P. Stack, U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart commander reads to Patch Elementary School kindergartners from “The Sneetches and Other Stories” by Dr. Seuss during Read Across America Day March 1. The program highlights the importance of developing a love for reading at an early age, according to the National Education Association Website.

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Give blood March 25

Stuttgart American Red Cross will host a community blood drive March 25 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Patch Community Club.

Appointments may be made at www.militarydonor.com; walk-ins are welcome, too. Donors must be at least 17 years old.

Free lunches with USO

United Service Organizations Stuttgart invites the community to its free monthly lunch March 27 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Building 2915 on Panzer Kaserne. Cajun and Creole-style food will be served until supplies run out.

The USO mobile canteen will serve free hotdogs, chips and drinks April 26 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Kelley Commissary and April 27 at the Patch Hub from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information, call 431-3505/civ. 07031-15-3505.

Pet Grooming now open on RB

The Robinson Barracks Exchange now has a new pet grooming concessionaire adjacent to the furniture store.

The service is available by appointment only on Wednesday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call civ. 0711-6566-058.

Learn cat, dog first aid March 30

The American Red Cross Stuttgart will offer a cat and dog first aid class March 30 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. that includes everything owners need to know to keep their pets healthy and safe.

The class will be held in Room 327, Building 2915, Panzer Kaserne.

For more information, call 431-2812/civ. 07031-15-2812.

Greens fee to increase April 1

The annual greens fee for the Stuttgart Golf Course in Kornwestheim will increase April 1 due to higher annual operating expenses and ongoing renovation projects.

For a full listing of the fees, visit www.stuttgartmwr.com/golf-course/fees, or call civ. 0714-187-9151.

Women's flea market

The "My Girlfriend's Closet" flea market is set for March 23 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Brewed Awakenings Café on Robinson Barracks.

The event is designed for women to buy or sell clothing and household items.

For more information, call 430-2110/civ. 0711-680-2110.

Youth group off to Garmisch in April

Common Bond, the Stuttgart

Religious Support Office's high school youth ministry, will sponsor a trip to Garmisch, during spring break, April 8-12. The trip is open to all high school students in the Stuttgart area.

Register at: www.csmspringbreak.eventbrite.com.

For more information, email stuttgartchapelyouth@gmail.com or call 430-7237/civ. 0711-680-7237.

Spring Fling 5K set

The 2013 Spring Fling 5K run, hosted by U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart's Family and MWR Sports and Fitness, will be held April 13 on Husky Field, Patch Barracks. The race will start at 10 a.m.

Register by April 9. The first 300 entrants will receive a T-shirt.

For more information, call the Patch Fitness Center at 430-7136/civ. 0711-680-7136.

Send your announcements to stuttgartmedia@eur.army.mil.

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Watch out for motorcycles

- Motorcycles can often be difficult to see in a car's blind spots or can be masked by bushes, fences and bridges. Drivers should take an extra moment to thoroughly check traffic when changing lanes or turning at intersections.
- Allow more following distance behind motorcycles. Motorcyclists often slow themselves by downshifting instead of breaking, which does not activate the brake light. At intersections, anticipate that motorcyclists may slow down without visual warning, and remember that slippery pavement makes stopping quickly more difficult.
- Motorcyclists sometimes make quick adjustments within a lane to be seen more easily and to minimize the effects of road debris, passing vehicles and wind. Drivers should understand that the purpose is not to be reckless or show off, but to make you aware or to allow you to share the lane with them.
- At slower speeds and with good road conditions, motorcycles are very maneuverable, however, don't expect motorcyclists to always be able to dodge out of the way.



Army Emergency Relief Campaign underway

Story by David Vergun
Army News Service

The annual Army Emergency Relief Campaign began March 1 and continues through May 15. This year's campaign slogan is: "Supporting Soldiers

and their families, yesterday, today and tomorrow."

The slogan is meant to create awareness about how Army Emergency Relief offers benefits to those in need, according to campaign officials.

And of course, the campaign also hopes to replenish its resources

through donations. The campaign provides an opportunity for Soldiers to look out for each other, continuing the AER legacy of "helping the Army take care of its own."

Last year, AER disbursed \$76.8 million in assistance to more than 59,000 Soldiers and their families. Some 38 percent of that assistance was obtained through the command referral program, which gives company commanders and first sergeants the authority to approve up to \$1,500 in interest-free loans for their Soldiers.

There is no limit on the amount of assistance that can be provided or limit on the number of times a Soldier may request assistance. Loans and grants are all based on specific needs.

AER is a private, non-profit organization, founded in 1942 to provide financial assistance to active duty and retired Soldiers and their families. Since AER's beginnings, some 3.5 million Soldiers and families have

received more than \$1.5 billion in support.

Soldiers requiring AER assistance should contact their command's representative or first sergeant.

AER offices are located at major installations and commands across the U.S. and in Japan, Germany, Korea and eight other countries.

Soldiers and families without access to an Army installation can still receive assistance from organizations in the other services similar to AER: Air Force Aid Society, Navy Marine Corps Relief Society and Coast Guard Mutual Assistance.

Editor's Note: To make a donation to Army Emergency Relief, see your unit representative or visit www.aerhq.org. To speak to the USAG Stuttgart AER Officer, call 431-2038/civ. 07031-15-2038, or stop by Army Community Service, Building 2915, Panzer Kaserne.



Courtesy of Army Emergency Relief

The 2013 Army Emergency Campaign began on March 1 and runs through May 15. Every year, AER helps thousands of service members with financial assistance in the form of loans and grants. Donations can be made through your unit representative or online at www.aerhq.org.

AER assistance includes:

- Emergency funds for rent, food, travel, car repair, funeral, medical and dental expenses
- Children and spouse scholarships
- Grants to Soldiers medically evacuated from Afghanistan
- Support to families of fallen Soldiers
- Repair of heating and air-conditioning systems
- Travel funds for permanent change of station when advances are not forthcoming
- Repair or purchase of stoves or refrigerators
- Purchase of child car seats
- Purchase of cranial helmets when prescribed by medical authority and not authorized by TRICARE

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Easter and Spring Markets

March 24

Waldenbuch Easter Market

Waldenbuch will host its traditional Easter market to ring in spring and Easter festivities. The market is located at the Waldenbuch Castle (Museum der Alltagskultur) and features a variety of Easter and spring-inspired decorations and presents, such as hand-painted eggs, herbal lotions and soaps, jewelry and paintings. Booths throughout Waldenbuch's downtown area offer food, chocolates and baked goods.

The market is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. All stores in downtown Waldenbuch are open from 1-6 p.m.

For more information, visit www.museum-der-alltagskultur.de.

March 30 to April 7

Burg Hohenzollern Spring Awakening

The Hohenzollern fortress will transform into a colorful flower garden during this annual event. Regional florists offer Easter wreaths, nests and bouquets. The spring event is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

For more information, visit www.burg-hohenzollern.com.

Ongoing until April 1

Nürnberg Easter Market

Nürnberg will host its annual "Häferlesmarkt," or Easter market, at the "Hauptmarkt" market square. More than 80 booths will offer arts and crafts, ceramics, books, interior decorations and more. The market is open Monday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday and Easter Monday (April 1) from 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. The market will be closed Good Friday (March 29).

For more information, visit www.nuernberg.de.

April 6-7

Esslingen Spring and Garden Market

Esslingen will celebrate the awakening of spring with the "Esslinger Frühling and Gartentage," or spring and garden market, in the historic downtown area. The market will be open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on both days. More than 100 exhibitors will present interior decorations, flowers, gardening tips, sculptures, art and ceramics as well as antiques during the two-day event. A garden flea market will also be of-

fered at "Blarerplatz." All stores will be open April 7 from 1-6 p.m.

For more information, visit www.city.esslingen.de.

April 14

Dettingen Spring Awakening

Dettingen will host its "Frühlingserwachen," or spring awakening festival, at the market square and throughout the downtown area. The spring market will feature flowers, plants and gardening utensils. The event will also offer regional food and beverages, music and family entertainment. The market is open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. All stores will be open from noon to 5 p.m.



USAG Stuttgart Religious Support Office

Seasonal Worship Services

Catholic

March 28, Holy Thursday Mass
7 p.m., Patch Chapel

March 29, Good Friday Liturgy
• 3 p.m., Patch Chapel
• 6 p.m., Patch Chapel

March 30, Easter Vigil
8 p.m., Panzer Chapel

March 31, Easter Sunday Mass
• 9 a.m., Patch Chapel
• Noon, Robinson Barracks Chapel
• 5 p.m., Patch Chapel

Jewish

March 25, Passover, 1st Seder
6 p.m., Patch Religious Education Center

March 26, Passover, 2nd Seder
6 p.m., Patch Religious Education Center

Protestant

March 28, Maundy Thursday (Liturgical)
6 p.m., Panzer Chapel

March 29, Good Friday Tenebrae service (Liturgical)
6 p.m., Panzer Chapel

March 31, Easter service
• 7:30 a.m., Community sunrise service, Panzer Chapel
• 8:30 a.m., Panzer Chapel (Liturgical)
• 10 a.m., Robinson Barracks Chapel
• 10:30 a.m., Panzer Chapel (Contemporary)
• 11 a.m., Patch Chapel
• 12:30 p.m., Panzer Chapel (Gospel)
• 12:45 p.m., Patch Chapel (COGIC)

Panzer Chapel: Building 2940
Robinson Barracks Chapel: Building 115
Patch Chapel: Building 2305
USAG Stuttgart Religious Support Office: 431-3079/
civ. 07031-15-3079

ADVERTISE- MENT

What's happening in FMWR

Golf membership drive

The Stuttgart Golf Course will host its annual greens fee membership drive March 23 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Patrons can enter to win a single membership. The golf course is located in Kornwestheim on Aldinger Strasse.

For more information, call civ. 0714-187-9150.

Easter brunch is on

The Swabian Special Events Center on Patch Barracks will offer Easter brunch March 31 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The all-you-can-eat American-style buffet includes scrambled eggs, hash browns, bacon, baked beans, fresh fruit and more.

Reservations are recommended. For more information, call 430-8205/civ. 0711-680-8205.

Egg hunt, Easter brunch at Kelley Club

An all-you-can-eat Easter brunch will be offered at the Kelley Club March 31 from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. An omelet and carving station as well as an Easter egg hunt for

children will be offered.

For more information, or to make a reservation, call 421-4660/civ. 0711-729-4660.

Last ski trips of the season

U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Outdoor Recreation will host several upcoming ski trips. These include one-day trips to Garmisch, March 23 and to Ischgl March 30.

For more information, call ODR at 431-2774/civ. 07031-15-2774.

Free egg hunt, 'Tell me a Story'

U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Child, Youth and School Services will host its annual egg hunt March 30 on Patch Barracks. The egg hunt is open for all ages and will begin at 10 a.m. on Husky Field. The hunt will be followed by a presentation of Giles Andreae's and Guy Parker-Rees' book "Giraffes Can't Dance" at the Patch Community Club from 11:15-11:45 a.m.

For more Family and MWR activities, go to the FMWR website at www.stuttgartmwr.com.



Coming to Patch Theater

March 22 — Warm Bodies (PG-13) 6 p.m.; The Incredible Burt Wonderstone (PG-13) 8 p.m.

March 23 — The Incredible Burt Wonderstone (PG-13) 2 p.m.; The Call (PG-13) 5 p.m.; Dead Man Down (R) 8 p.m.

March 24 — The Call (PG-13) 2 p.m.; The Gilt Trip (PG-13) 5 p.m.; The Incredible Burt Wonderstone (PG-13) 8 p.m.

March 25 — The Incredible Burt Wonderstone (PG-13) 6 p.m.

March 26 — Closed

March 27 — Warm Bodies (PG-13) 6 p.m.

March 28 — Parker (R) 6 p.m.

March 29 — Les Misérables (PG-13) 6 p.m.; The Gilt Trip (PG) 9 p.m.

March 30 — Wreck-It Ralph (PG) 2 p.m.; The Croods (PG) 4:30 p.m.; Admission (PG-13) 7 p.m.

March 31 — Wreck-It Ralph (PG) 2 p.m.; The Gilt Trip 4:30 p.m., Admission (PG-13) 7 p.m.



In "The Call," emergency operator Jordan, played by Halle Berry, receives a call from an abducted girl. To save the young girl's life, Jordan must deal with a killer from her past.

TriStar Pictures

Family and MWR Advertisement



COMEDY SQUADRON

Army Forces Entertainment Comedy Squadron

5 Comedians for a full night of laughs. Food and drinks available for purchase.

March 30, 8 p.m., Free show.

Patch Community Club, Patch Barracks

For more information call:
DSN 430 5433, CIV 0711 680 5433



A CAPELLA

Yale University Alley Cats

One of the nation's most renowned a capella groups performs a free show for all.

March 23, noon

On front lawn in front of MARFOREUR, Bldg. 2901 - Panzer Kaserne, next to the eXchange.

For more information call:
DSN 430 2110 CIV 0711 680 2110



YOUTH EVENTS

Month of the Military Child

Honoring the heroes of the future. Many events and activities are scheduled throughout the month of April.

Please visit www.stuttgartmwr.com for a full listing.

For more information call:
DSN 430 7480, CIV 0711 680 7480

To sign up for 'Weekly Updates' go to www.stuttgartmwr.com

To follow us on Facebook go to www.facebook.com/familyandmwr and



us!



Don't be roadkill.

**Be aware of your
surroundings!**

LOL?
Nope,
DOA

KNOW WHAT'S RIGHT
know the
signs
DO WHAT'S RIGHT

The signs are all around.
It's up to **YOU** to recognize
and act on them.



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